

# W5YI

National Volunteer Examiner Coordinator

## REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

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## FCC OFFICIALS AFFIRM: NO POWER LIMITS LURKING

In response to an inquiry by U.S. senator Ted Stevens of Alaska, FCC Private Radio Bureau Deputy Chief Beverly Baker and Chief **Ralph Haller/N4RH** have affirmed that new power limits on hams or frequency reallocations are not planned.

**Harley Steward/KL7IZZ** and **Arlene Steward/KL7HO** of Anchorage wrote Sen. Stevens: "I resent the fact that commercial interests are trying to usurp the radio frequencies that have been allocated to ham radio enthusiasts. These interests have apparently convinced the FCC that they are entitled to them. The individual ham cannot compete with the big money and lobbying of greedy interests.

"Another complaint is the reduction of power (watts out) the FCC is surreptitiously planning for the ham. By cutting the power they can effectively stop us dead in our tracks especially in the low ebb of the sunspot cycle."

Referring to the Commission's inquiry into 'scanner laws', the Stewards wrote that they doubt there will be any significant deterrence of crime if ham gear that can monitor emergency services is confiscated. They called this a "heavy handed policy."

### FCC responds

The usual procedure when a ham writes his or her

Congressional representative about the FCC is that the representative forwards the letter to the FCC for a response. In some high-profile cases, where the FCC receives large numbers of similar complaints, a 'canned' or pre-formatted response is created and sent to the representative.

In this case, however, it appears that a customized response was sent to Stevens by Baker on Haller's behalf. She wrote:

"Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of Mr. Harley Stewart and Mrs. Arlene Stewart. Mr. and Mrs. Stewart express their concerns about possible reallocation of radio spectrum from the amateur service to other radio services, reduction in transmitter power amateur stations are authorized to use, and state and local confiscation of equipment that allows reception of communications on emergency frequencies.

"Changes in the allocation of radio spectrum between various services and the amount of power amateur stations are authorized to use can occur only after the Commission has completed a rule making proceeding as required by the *Administrative Procedures Act*, 5 USC 500-576. There are no rule making proceedings presently open, or planned, that could result in the reallocation of spectrum from the amateur service to other radio services or a reduction in the transmitter power



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amateur stations are authorized.

"We note, however, that a *World Administrative Radio Conference* (WARC) is planned for 1992 and that the agreements reached at this WARC could result in changes to the radio spectrum allocations for numerous services, including the amateur service.

"Mr. and Mrs. Stewart's concern about state and local laws that, in some cases, allow confiscation of amateur equipment is being addressed in a proceeding the Commission initiated recently. See *Notice of Inquiry* PR Docket No. 91-36, 6 FCC rcd 1305 (1991). Comments in that proceeding may be submitted on or before June 7, 1991."

"Sincerely, Beverly G. Baker for Ralph A. Haller Chief, Private Radio Bureau." (*Letter 23 May 1991*)

## COMMUNICATIONS PRIVACY ACT: How far will it go? GETTING BACK AT "JUST PLAIN SNOOPS"

When the *Electronic Communications Privacy Act* (ECPA) became law in 1986, many amateurs and communications hobbyists were shocked at its strange and contradictory provisions. Amateur Radio, GMRS and Business Radio were exempted from its reach after considerable lobbying by ARRL and users in those services.

But the law remains on the books, and now a group of consultants, association executives and former Congressional staff members wants to extend the reach of ECPA to cover more kinds of radio.

Currently the ECPA prohibits reception of various kinds of radio transmissions. Cellular telephone and "radio common carrier" transmissions such as conventional mobile telephone and voice and data paging are off limits. Even non common-carrier radio services may be *verboden* if they are owned by common carriers, but the same transmissions made over non-common carrier-owned transmitters may be legally received.

Scrambled transmissions must not be unscrambled except by the intended recipients. It continues to be illegal under ECPA to *receive interference* from a radio common carrier unless the source of the interference is unknown. A patchwork of complex categories, the ECPA never achieved its goal of a uniform "Berlin Wall" against radio "interceptors".

Cordless telephones were exempted from the ECPA's "privacy protections". The reason given was that most

people understand that cordless phones may be heard on other cordless telephones as well as scanners and some mediumwave receivers. Drafters of the legislation were informed that cellular systems are more susceptible to unauthorized reception (higher power, greater range than cordless and vulnerability to ordinary TV and VCR reception). But in the face of strong pressure from cellular carriers the penalties for receiving cellular signals were left in place.

In a new report to the Senate, the "Privacy and Technology Task Force" asks to remove the exemption for cordless telephones. That is, monitoring of cordless communications would become illegal even if the signals are transmitted "in the clear" and picked up on ordinary receivers.

The Task Force wants to extend "protection" to certain new radio technologies such as CT-2 (the British cordless phone under experimentation in the U.S.), PCN (Personal Communications Network, an indoor/outdoor cellular system at 1.8 GHz) and Enhanced Specialized Mobile Radio, a time-domain multiplex dispatching system for vehicle fleets. The Task Force also wants to provide penalties for receiving non-amateur wireless data communications.

Instead of establishing whether or not radio signals are accessible because of the technology used to transmit them, the Task Force recommends that the *intent of the person using the scanner* is the key to whether penalties should be applied:

"The task force is of the view that the rights of private citizens using radio scanners can appropriately be addressed by clearly setting forth specific intent requirements in the Act, by tying the criminal penalty to targeted surveillance of specific communications and by further adjusting the civil and criminal penalty of the Act, rather than exempting whole categories of telephone technologies and thus making them fair game for monitoring by government agents without a warrant, corporate spies or *just plain snoops*," the report said.

Radio consultant Robert Horvitz, former executive director of the *Association of North American Radio Clubs*, [a short-wave listening group] told us that the task force report raises serious questions about the direction of ECPA. In a letter to Sen. Patrick Leahy, who has called for re-examination of ECPA, Horvitz wrote:

"Enacting legislation to counter the laws of physics

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER EXAMINER?  
I am a currently licensed ☐ Advanced, ☐ Extra Class amateur radio operator for ☐ mobile ☐ fixed ☐ both ☐ neither ☐ I do not own a station or operator license revoked or suspended.



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has serious implications for radio receiver owners: they can find themselves accidentally tuning in signals which it is a crime to intercept intentionally. Of course, any signal that can be unintentionally received inside one's home on inexpensive and widely available equipment is in fact "readily accessible," whatever Congress says. The absurdity of offering legal protection to media which are that insecure could have been avoided with an appropriately narrow definition of "intent." But the ECPA did not provide one.

"Perhaps the most positive aspect of the Task Force report is that it recognizes this need and proposes that "intentional interception" be construed as the "targeted surveillance of specific communications." Note that traditional concepts of intent have only a limited relevance to automatic scanning equipment. What demonstrates intent when the device itself does the searching? Buying the radio? Turning it on? Setting the scan limits? The duration of individual channel "dwells"?

Because of the previous vociferous amateur opposition to legislation that would have reduced amateur privileges (such as autopatching) the ECPA is unlikely to directly affect amateur frequencies. But if the Task Force recommendations are implemented in amendments to ECPA, using HF/VHF/UHF radio receiving equipment could become suspect and even downright dangerous. Hearings on ECPA changes are expected later this year.

## FCC CRACKS DOWN ON BUGGING DEVICES

Ever wonder if those wiretaps and spy transmitters advertised in the back of electronic magazines are for real? Don't those things have to be approved by the FCC?

They are real and they do have to be approved. Many manufacturers are learning the hard way that the FCC is concerned about the proliferation of secret devices that are not certified or type-accepted. "They are pervasive across the country," an FCC official told us.

The Commission studies the advertising and marketing of these products and sometimes confiscates them. We viewed a collection of tiny UHF transmitters built into common home and office products.

On April 29, the FCC mailed warnings to 142 manufacturers of electronic bugs as follows (excerpted):

"It has come to our attention that you are marketing radio frequency (RF) devices and/or telephone attachment equipment for use in surveillance situations. These RF and telephone attachment devices require equipment authorization from the FCC before they can be marketed. The FCC regulates both RF devices such as transmitters and certain radio receivers and any device for attachment to the public switched telephone network. ...

"If you are marketing RF devices not in compliance with either Part 15 or Part 2 standards, or if you are marketing unregistered attachments to the public switched telephone network, you must cease such marketing until those devices and attachments have been brought into compliance with FCC Rules.

"...Violations of the Communications Act and Rules are punishable by administrative monetary forfeitures or fines up to \$10,000 per day of violation to an aggregate total of \$75,000."

The letter goes on to point out that criminal violations of the Communications Act carry penalties of imprisonment and fines up to \$500,000 depending on the offense.

The letters are warnings only and do not impose forfeitures, but FCC staff members assured us that further enforcement actions are quite possible. Some recipients are telephoning the FCC to find out if the letters are real or a hoax. Some insist that the devices are custom manufactured for the purchaser's own frequency, thus only the purchaser is responsible for following FCC rules.

In fact, however, if the purchaser is licensed under FCC rules (for example in the Police Radio Service) to use such devices, the devices must be FCC Type-Accepted for use in that service. If the device is not for use in any licensed service, it must be certified under Part 15 (although Section 15.9 prohibits use of any Part 15 device for eavesdropping unless under law enforcement authority). Without these FCC approvals, the only party allowed to acquire such equipment is the Federal Government.

Unfortunately for the cloak-and-dagger crowd, some devices could never be FCC certified. The rules require an FCC ID to be displayed on every product the Commission approves. The presence of an FCC ID on a fountain-pen or martini-olive transmitter would undoubtedly alert the "buggee" that something funny is going on!

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- Orbital Communications of Fairfax, Virginia, hopes to eventually launch up to 24 satellites to provide low-cost full time coverage worldwide. Other LEO uses include messaging, monitoring, and tracking applications, and requesting help in roadside emergencies.

The Radio Amateur's LICENSING HANDBOOK is for everyone who is in ed im li tes l for j-hai who want to know about amateur radio license tests, amateurs



● While the United States is getting its No-Code VHF Technician ham license under way, *the United Kingdom is trying a new "Novice" license* as a way of interesting newcomers in pursuing a technical career. The RSGB (*Radio Society of Great Britain*) has designated 1991 as *"The Year of the Novice."* Great Britain has had a codeless entry level for decades, but it apparently has failed to interest newcomers in great numbers.

There are two British Novice classes. The "Novice B" license will permit operation on VHF frequencies above 30 MHz. The "Novice A" ticket requires 5 wpm Morse code knowledge and allows further frequencies below 30 MHz.

Candidates for the Novice license must first undergo a 30 hour RSGB sanctioned training course containing no more than four students.

● Where they can legally do so, the FCC is *relaxing its rules which require radio officers with Morse code proficiency* aboard ocean-going vessels. The Commission recently amended its rules to permit small passenger ships weighing under 100 gross tons to operate under the general exemption from the Manual Morse code radio-telegraph station requirements beyond the current 100 nautical mile limit.

● **Dr. Edward N. Ludin, M.D., K2UK**, is president of the *Medical Amateur Radio Council, Ltd.* MARCO consists of doctors and dentists who are also licensed ham operators. Ludin, along with two other doctors had their position published in the March issue of *New Jersey Medicine*, the official publication of the *New Jersey Medical Society*, on the matter of telegraphy waivers [now exemptions] for handicapped amateurs.

Dr. Ludin's letter follows:

"The Federal Communications Commission is responsible for, among other things, the criteria used for licensure of amateur radio operators. For political reasons, the FCC has decreed that 'handicapped' individuals may request waiver of the requirement to learn Morse code in order to achieve a certain class of license.

"Of course, he must submit a 'physician's certificate' stating that due to a severe handicap under the 1988 *Developmental Disabilities Act*, 29 USC 706 (15)(A)(III), the examinee is unable to meet the 13 or 20 wpm requirement.' Further, he must submit a release allowing FCC access to appropriate medical records.

"Aside from the obvious considerable controversy that this has created among the amateur radio community, the physician is now obligated to try to understand what this means. There is a large handicap organization based in Minnesota, which, among other activities, encourages and trains individuals to become a licensed amateur radio operator, regardless of their handicap. Overcoming the handicap in order to achieve this goal is part of the individual's rehabilitation and life style. This organization, known as Handi-Hams, is very much against this waiver procedure.

"May I suggest that the average physician in the state of New Jersey does not know what the term 'severely handicapped individual' means in accordance with the above identified Act, nor could he be expected to know what effect these disabilities may have on learning the Morse code. Thus, the physician may feel that he will do his patient 'a favor' by signing such a certificate just to accommodate his patient's request.

"I strongly urge the physicians of the state of New Jersey not to summarily sign such a certificate.

Rather, if you are asked about this, please request from a local amateur radio operator, preferably another physician, appropriate advice. Aside from myself, there are many licensed physician amateurs in this State. From my own personal knowledge, there are two very active hams who are involved with *New Jersey Medicine*, Morris Soled, M.D., on the *Committee on Publication*, and Christine E. Haycock, M.D., on the *Editorial Board*. I hope that other physician hams will let their fellow physicians at the local level know of their availability to assist in this regard. [Signed: Edward N. Ludin, M.D., K2UK.]

**Christine Haycock, M.D., WB2YBA**, also published a notice in *New Jersey Medicine* entitled: "Don't Sign the Letter."

"Totally handicapped quadriplegic have mastered these requirements as well as blind or deaf individuals, and the psychological benefits of this achievement are immeasurable. There are, however, some rare instances where an individual cannot meet this goal, hence the FCC edict. Only a person familiar with both medicine and amateur radio can make this determination correctly," she wrote.

**Morris Soled, M.D., W2NXX**, wrote "Ham radio is a popular hobby among physicians, and you should be able to find a member of your staff to answer further questions before being a 'nice guy' and signing a note you do not understand."

● Effective April 1, 1991, *ICOM has a new one year warranty program* on all amateur HF/VHF/UHF transceivers and receivers.

ICOM has also appointed Chris Lougee to the position National Services Manager. His responsibilities include overseeing the regional service centers, Technical Service Department, Warehouse facilities and Parts Department.



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## APRIL VE PROGRAM STATISTICS

<u>April</u>		<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
<u>No. VEC's</u>		<u>*18</u>	<u>*18</u>	<u>*18</u>
<b>Testing Sessions</b>				
<u>VEC</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	
W5YI	28.1%	41.3%	47.7%	
ARRL	43.5	35.2	32.1	
CAVEC	4.2	3.8	6.5	
DeVRY	4.2	3.8	4.6	
SunV			1.3	
Others (13)	20.1	14.2	7.8	
<b>Year-to-Date Sessions</b>		<b>1727</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>2199</b>
<b>Elements Administ.</b>				
<u>VEC</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	
W5YI	24.7%	33.1%	38.4%	
ARRL	48.0	45.0	37.3	
CAVEC	4.7	7.1	7.6	
DeVRY	3.1	2.9	3.5	
SunV			3.2	
Others (13)	19.5	11.9	10.0	
<b>Year-to-Date Elements</b>		<b>32633</b>	<b>37006</b>	<b>47992</b>
<b>Applicants Tested</b>				
<u>VEC</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	
W5YI	31.4%	34.3%	39.2%	
ARRL	48.3	44.3	37.2	
CAVEC	4.4	6.1	6.7	
DeVRY	3.1	3.2	3.9	
SunV			3.0	
Others (13)	19.5	11.9	10.0	
<b>Year-to-Date Tested</b>		<b>19324</b>	<b>22242</b>	<b>28593</b>
<b>April</b>				
Pass Rate - All		62.2%	60.5%	66.8%
Applicants/Session		12.0	12.5	15.2
Elements/Applicant		1.7	1.6	1.7
Sessions Per VEC		25.4 (*)	29.3	39.5

### Administrative Errors by VE's/VEC's

<u>April</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
Defect. Applications	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%
Late Filed Sessions	1.1%	1.0%	1.7%
Defective Reports	2.0%	0.6%	0.3%

(\*) Note: The FCC previously considered ARRL, W5YI and DeVry to be 13 VEC's each since VEC's initially were appointed on a regional basis. Since any VEC may now coordinate examinations in any region, the FCC reduced the number of VEC Regions (62) to VEC Organizations (18.) We have adjusted 1989 figures to reflect this change.

[Source: Personal Radio Branch/FCC; Washington, D.C.]

## APRIL AMATEUR LICENSING STATISTICS

<u>April</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	
New					
Amateurs:	2195	2915	2658	5749	
<u>Upgrading:</u>					
Novices	1218	1537	1289	1621	
Technicians	389	508	598	772	
Generals	317	409	410	500	
Advanced	247	254	249	346	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2171</b>	<b>2708</b>	<b>2546</b>	<b>3239</b>	
<u>Renewals: (*)</u>					
Total Renew:	2926	* 371	* 77	* 86	
Novices	257	* 56	* 14	* 5	
<u>Purged: (*)</u>					
Total Dropped:	959	*1100	* 12	* 16	
Novices	579	* 370	* 0	* 2	
<u>Census:</u>					
<b>Indiv. Oper.</b>	<b>435435</b>	<b>452919</b>	<b>457369</b>	<b>512918</b>	
Change/Year	+12402	+17484*	+4450*	+55549*	
<u>Individual Operators by Class:</u> (and % of total)					
<u>Extra</u>	<u>Advan.</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Technic.</u>	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Total:</u>
<u>April 1988</u>					
44819	98403	113623	95810	82780	<b>435435</b>
10.3%	22.6%	26.1%	22.0%	19.0%	100.0%
<u>April 1989 (*)</u>					
48049	100183	114975	106341	83371	<b>452919</b>
10.6%	22.1%	25.4%	23.5%	18.4%	100.0%
<u>April 1990 (*)</u>					
49169	99702	114406	112214	81878	<b>457369</b>
10.7%	21.8%	25.0%	24.6%	17.9%	100.0%
<u>April 1991 (*)</u>					
54887	106075	120800	134655	96501	<b>512918</b>
10.7%	20.7%	23.5%	26.3%	18.8%	100.0%
Club/					
RACES &	(1988)	(1989)	(1990)	(1991)	
Military:	<u>2373</u>	<u>2477</u>	<u>2449</u>	<u>2432</u>	
<b>Total Active:</b>	<b>437808</b>	<b>455396</b>	<b>459818</b>	<b>515350</b>	
% Increase	+2.9%	*+4.2%	*+1.0%	*+12.1%	

(\*) NOTE: The number of amateurs in 1990 and 1991 is not comparable with prior years. Due to the implementation of the 10-year term license in 1984, amateurs who would ordinarily be dropping out of the Amateur Service between 1989 and 1993 by not renewing will be carried on the amateur roles for another five years before being purged from the FCC's data base. This has the effect of somewhat overstating the amateur census for 1989 through 1991 since the records of silent keys and non-renewals will not be deleted. **For the first time, the Technician Class has now overtaken General as the most widely held ticket!**

[Source: FCC Licensing Facility, Gettysburg, PA]



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## PETITIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION FILED ON BUSINESS USE OF 220-222 MHZ BAND

Just when we thought the Commission proceeding re-allocating 220-222 MHz to exclusive narrow-band Land Mobile operation was history, up pops two more *Petitions for Reconsideration*.

**David B. Popkin, W2CC** of Englewood, New Jersey, has filed a *Petition for Immediate Relief and Reconsideration* contending that the Final Rule "...fails to indicate that the Amateur Radio Service may continue to operate for a ninety-day period after the effective date of the Rules and also indicates a number of apparently erroneous changes in the Amateur Radio Service Rules."

Popkin wants the Final Rule to be modified to indicate that the effective date of the changes to Part 97 is ninety days after May 29, 1991, or August 27. [The FCC has already agreed to the August 27th date in a Public Notice issued May 13th.]

Popkin also alleges that the Final Rules change a number of frequency segments in Part 97 which are not related to the 220-222 MHz reallocation. "Either these changes have been made in error or have been made without benefit of the required rulemaking procedures."

The beacon frequencies of 144.275-144.300 were changed to 144.05-144.06 MHz and 432.300-432.400 changed to 432.07-437.08 in Part 97.203(d). Repeaters are excluded from the 50.0-52.0 MHz 6m repeater subband instead of 50.0-51.0 MHz: §97.205(b) ...and the 222.10-223.91 MHz 1.25 MHz Novice subband has been changed to 222-225 MHz.: §97.301(f).

"The changes made to the above three sections should be returned to the original frequency band segments as contained in the current rules."  
(Petition filed: 5/13/91, Received at FCC: 5/20/91)

**Dr. Michael C. Trahos, D.O., KB4PGC**, of Alexandria, VA, was one of the original petitioners for a codeless Amateur Radio class. He also is a certified Telecommunications Engineer and is licensed in the Special Emergency Radio Service (SERS).

He questions the FCC adopted Rules that set aside 10 channels (No. 161-170 between 220-222 MHz) for use by public safety authorities. The Final Rule excludes all SERS licensees. Trahos argues that a previous Commission rulemaking correctly defined "public safety authorities": as those licensed in the Public Safety and

Special Emergency Radio Services. "Therefore, the Commission must reconsider ...and include in this rule those SERS entities involved with the immediate safety-of-life/rendition and delivery of medical services to the public." (Petition filed and received by FCC 5/15/91)

## MANY COMMENTS ON "SCANNER LAWS" RECEIVED!

The Commission has acknowledged many comments in their *Inquiry into the Need to Preempt State and Local Laws Concerning Amateur Operator Use of Transceivers Capable of Reception Beyond the Amateur Service Allocations*, PR Docket 91-36

Several local/state laws, often called "scanner laws," prohibit the possession of radio receivers in vehicles capable of receiving police and other public safety channels. This inquiry seeks information regarding the need for amateurs to have the capability to receive other than amateur spectrum in their automobiles.

**Bob Grove, WA4PYQ**, of Brasstown, NC, commented that "...the use of amateur transceivers with public safety frequencies provides low cost, compact, simple access to vital information exchange among cooperating participants and agencies during emergencies requiring mutual aid. Commercial grade (non-amateur) transceivers are available which provide the same frequency coverage as the amateur transceivers in question, yet are unaddressed in the NOI. This inconsistency raises considerable question as to the outcome of any rulemaking banning such amateur radio equipment. ...The ability to utilize one piece of equipment for several services is of enormous and logistic benefit to volunteers involved in scene-of-disaster and other lifesaving activities..."

[Comment period closed June 7, Replies are due: July 7.]

## RADIO AMATEUR CALLBOOK - END OF AN ERA?

*Lake Bluff, Illinois, Operation to Close Mid June*

There is no better known publication in ham radio circles than the *Radio Amateur's Callbook*. It has become as much a ham tradition as the Morse code key. The North American edition weighs in at almost five pounds and lists everyone licensed as an amateur radio operator in our hemisphere. It has been continually published for some seventy-one years - each adorned with its Pegasus, flying horse symbol. The foreign edition indicates amateur operators from every corner of the globe. Together, the two massive volumes form the acknowledged register of ham operators worldwide

Callbook owner, **Herb Nelson, W9IGL**, sold the Call-



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book eighteen months ago to a New York publisher. In April he was notified that the new owner would be closing down the Callbook's office in suburban Chicago and moving the operation to the east coast. Nelson and his staff were to be terminated.

The closing date is now set for Friday, June 14th. On that date, everything gets shipped to Lakewood, N.J. The new owner advertised for an amateur to run the 'new' Callbook. We met the new editor, **Albert P Lahndt, K2IAG**, of Mountain Lakes, N.J. at the Dayton HamVention a few weeks ago.

We decided to telephone Herb Nelson and get his thoughts about the closing. The Callbook has been his life for more than three decades:

**W5YI:** When was the Callbook sold ...and to who?

**W9IGL:** It was sold October 24, 1989, to *BPI Communications*. Their parent company is *Affiliated Publications* in Boston - which is the *Boston Globe* newspaper. BPI Communications in New York is one of their companies ...and BPI is basically *Billboard Magazine*.

**W5YI:** BPI is not in the amateur radio publication business. Why did they want the Callbook?

**W9IGL:** They own and publish the *World Radio TV Handbook* for short-wave listeners ...also own the *M Street Directory* - for broadcast stations. That name is taken from FCC's street address in Washington; 1919 M Street. It lists all of the commercial radio stations in the country ...the owners, the sales, ...frequencies. The Callbook rounded out their stable. They now publish to the SWL, professional and amateur radio markets.

**W5YI:** We understand that BPI is closing your Lake Bluff, Illinois, offices.

**W9IGL:** Yes, The company has decided in the interest of economy to close this office and move the operation to Lakewood, New Jersey, where they have a computer center and a very large warehouse/distribution facility.

**W5YI:** How long have you been with the Callbook, Herb.

**W9IGL:** I have been with them for thirty-five years in one form or another. I have run the business for the last fifteen years. We do everything but the printing and binding here in Lake Bluff ...including all the editorial work, updating the master files and determine what goes into the book. We have it printed and bound and then we do the shipping from here. That will all

change. That will now be done in Lakewood, New Jersey. Some production work may come out of the BPI's headquarters in New York.

**W5YI:** When was it decided to move the Callbook to New Jersey?

**W9IGL:** The decision to close this office and move the Callbook to New Jersey was made at the beginning of April. It was not a total surprise ...there had been some clues. There was no indication, however, that it was going to happen 'right now.' I would have thought something like this would have been planned somewhat more in advance ...but it wasn't. Our office will be closed and our employees terminated as of Friday, June 14th. I have been terminated, too ...I have a letter to prove it. It looks like I am going to be retired for the first time in 45 years.

**W5YI:** What is it like putting out the Callbook?

**W9IGL:** We have had competitors who have simply published the FCC's master file. A number of them have purchased the FCC tape for the U.S. listings and simply had it typeset. This is not what we do at all. The FCC master file is full of errors ...and frankly quite out of date. Many people move and simply do not bother to inform the FCC until the next time they renew their license. The same thing goes on with automobile driver's licenses. If you get stopped for speeding or something, the officer will ask you 'Is this your current address?' Quite often it isn't because no one bothers to update their records. It is the same thing with an amateur radio license.

We have a staff of people, year round who constantly update both the U.S. and foreign files. We go over the monthly update transaction tape from the FCC ...and correct the obvious typographical errors. Some of the comparison is done by computer, but a lot of it is done by hand. We bump the FCC tape against our master file and we can tell if the transaction is a renewal without a change.

We check the zip codes against the cities. The FCC does not do any proof reading. They depend on the amateur to correct the license ...many people do not even look at their license. Even **Barry Goldwater's (K7UGA)** street address is wrong in the FCC records. He lives on Hogan Drive, not Hogahn Drive. We corrected it.

We also receive a lot of mail from radio clubs and individuals sending us changes of address. The post office notifies us of 'nixies' ...bad addresses that are corrections to our mailing list. [The Callbook often

HAM LICENSE PREPARATION SOFTWARE - Take sample ham radio tests at your IBM compatible keyboard. Study and 1,900 questions and answers. HAM RADIO HANDBOOK - NOW!! Obtain your Amateur Radio License. It tells you a lot about the FCC rules and regulations. Multiple choice questions. Correct answers.



# W5YI REPORT

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rents out its mailing list and uses the new addresses supplied by the post office to revise its files.] We process all of these and keep our files as accurate as we can. We even publish notices 'QTH wanted by Callbook'. Not only do individuals respond, but others who have the needed information. We go to a lot of trouble to keep our master files accurate. Updating goes on all the time. The final update is completed around the first week in October.

We then produce a set of tapes that is as accurate as we can and send them to a typesetter. Every page when they come back is proof read twice - 3,248 pages in the 1991 book. The printing and binding is done and we receive the Callbook in Lake Bluff about the middle of November ...a week to ten days before Thanksgiving.

Our intention is to get the Callbook on the street in the dealer's hands just before Thanksgiving so they are available for sale the Friday after Thanksgiving. That is a big selling day ...the kickoff for the Christmas season! Every day you lose is Christmas business that's gone forever. Our shipping season goes on for about 45 days - and that is the Callbook's very busiest time ...frantic at that time of year. We ship thousands and thousands of books all over the world ...many, many semi trailer loads.

**W5YI:** Will this quality control effort continue?

**W9IGL:** My understanding is that BPI will continue the practices that we have been following. They are not going to change anything. I can't say what is going to happen down the road, but they are hiring people and setting up the operation to duplicate what we have been doing in Lake Bluff. But it will be all new people.

**W5YI:** What about the foreign edition of the Callbook?

**W9IGL:** The goal again is to follow the system that we have set up. We have long standing relationships with individual amateurs, radio clubs and foreign governments who send us information ...most of it is in paper form and has to be manually key stroked. This keeps our editorial people busy year round. These listing sources are the property of *Billboard* and they intend to continue our practices. We have good records ...in effect that's the crown jewels. We keep a log of the information that we have received. When we don't hear from them for a while, we send them a reminder letter.

**W5YI:** You own the *Gordon West Radio School* license preparation materials business?

**W9IGL:** We bought the *Gordon West* business in September of 1988, I believe. That company consisted of

a series of packaged courses, tapes and study manuals ...and so on. There was also an assortment of other things. BPI has made the decision to abandon some product lines ...many of which we have already sold out of.

To my knowledge, they will continue with the Radio School courses ...at least temporarily. However, at this point they have no one on staff who knows anything about them. My understanding is that BPI would like to sell the amateur license preparation business [but] ...they are prepared to run it until they are able to do so. We are still conducting that business here in Lake Bluff. Some of it has been packed up already; ready for shipment to New Jersey.

The balance will be on a truck the afternoon of June 14. I understand that there will be a voice message on the telephone lines beginning June 10th asking you to call New Jersey. A new number will be assigned. Their existing business number is 908/363-5679. The mail will be automatically forwarded. There will be several semi-trailers full of file cabinets, desks, data, ...that sort of thing. BPI bought the stock of the company ...that includes everything. The Callbook maps that we have sold for many years will not be re-printed ...it has been sort of a hobby of mine for many years keeping the maps up.

**W5YI:** What about your data processing system?

**W9IGL:** All of our work is done on Tandy PC's and these too are being shipped to New Jersey. We maintain 1.1 million names and addresses on three Tandy 3000NL's/640K RAM with 600 mb hard drives. They have been fine, reliable machines ...we have used them every working day for about four years now. We attempted to use Taiwanese workstations at first but the failure rate was so high that we replaced them with Tandy 3000's. We have been very pleased with the Tandy computers. Everything, including the special computer tables will be moved intact to New Jersey.

**W5YI:** How many Radio Amateur Callbooks are printed and distributed?

**W9IGL:** We regard that as proprietary information. We ship a lot overseas. This traditionally amounts to between 20 and 25% of the business ...primarily in bulk to dealers by air freight.

**W5YI:** What is it like getting the Callbook ready for publishing?

**W9IGL:** We delay the final update as late as possible to make the resulting Callbook as complete and up to date as we can. Then it is a mad rush to get 3,300



pages of typesetting done by Black Dot in Crystal Lake, Illinois, and proof read. The 1991 Callbook was printed by R. Donnelly & Sons in Willard, Ohio. I don't know who will be handling this for BPI. They will probably go out and get competitive bids.

**W5YI:** Who started the Callbook?

**W9IGL:** The Callbook has been continuously published for seventy-one years ...since 1920. The man who claims to be the founder is **Charles Stimpson, W9TRD**. He died about ten years ago in Florida. My father bought the company from him in 1956 ...strictly as a business. He wasn't an amateur, but I was there and had already been licensed for ten years at the time. I provided the amateur information that he needed ...amateur practices, prefixes and that sort of thing.

The Callbook was very small when he bought it ...just a couple of desks in an office in downtown Chicago. Another firm did the shipping. It was not computerized ...computers were not even thought of then. A year or two later we went to IBM punch cards from the hand composing system that they were using. We leased mainframe computer time from a service bureau down in Chicago. Another client of that same service bureau was the *Official Airline Guide*. The Callbook is very similar to the OAG. In 1969 the Callbook was moved to its present location in Lake Bluff. We finally decided we could do the job on our own without the service bureau and went to '286 PC's. It has worked out very well.

**W5YI:** For three decades the Callbook has been your life ...your child. What are your feelings about all of this. What is going to happen in July when you don't go to the office?

**W9IGL:** While nothing is certain at this point, my feeling is that Billboard and I are going to work out some sort of consulting agreement. I think that it is inevitable that I will still be involved. We have not sat down to talk about it yet. I am not quite retirement age but I would like to slow down a little bit. The original intention when we sold this business was that I would have an understudy for a couple of years who would gradually take over the business ...and I would sort of fade into the background. We expected the business would remain here [in Lake Bluff.] That has all changed.

Two months ago, Billboard hired an amateur to replace me; **Al Lahndt, K2IAG** (Mountain Lakes, NJ.) He spent a week with us and then went back to New York. He later on spent a second week ...maybe even 10 days ...with us. I was simply told yesterday morning that Al

is no longer with the company. There are now no amateurs at BPI.

I want the amateur community to know that I appreciate the help and support they have given us for the thirty-five years I have been associated with the Callbook. I hope I can work out some sort of consulting arrangement with Billboard. I may still be involved ...one way or another.

## Conversation with Al Lahndt, K2IAG

I was interested to know why Al Lahndt was no longer with BPI Communications after only a couple of months on the job. I tried to telephone him. He doesn't have a telephone, so I called his parents in Englewood, Florida, who finally got word to him. 'Al, Senior' is K4EPU. 'Al, Junior,' called me this past Saturday morning.

He told me that he "...was terminated yesterday." It seems that BPI advertised for a publisher in the New York Times but Lahndt was hired as Editor-in-Chief of the Callbook. "They really wanted a moving man for the first nine weeks then I was supposed to revert to an editor after that."

He said BPI's complaint was that "I was not 'micro managing' the whole operation and giving them reports on exactly what Herb Nelson was doing every five minutes of the day. He (BPI's Glenn Heffernan) wanted me to know everything that was going on in Lake Bluff and Lakewood and report every five minutes ...on the five minutes."

"I made a presentation to their sales force and they are not going to do anything for the book. They call only on traditional book stores, museums, libraries ...and places of that nature where literature is typically sold. They will not enter into an electronic component store. This will hurt their distribution. They need to face up to that problem or they will not get to square one."

"Marge Patterson who trained with me will form the nucleus of a new staff. They have capable people, but no one there is a radio amateur. That may not be a big handicap. They will probably try to replace me. I knew things were not working out to Glenn Heffernan's satisfaction, but on the other hand, I simply could not do what he required me to do which is to 'keep tabs' on everybody to a ridiculous extent. They need to get some radio amateur expertise in there, but they should be all right."